

Crop Conditions as of May 20, 2010

Weather conditions in most areas of the province during the last two weeks have been mainly warm and dry, allowing seeding to progress rapidly. Provincially, seeding is estimated at 66 per cent complete, compared to seven per cent two weeks ago, and the 10-year average of 75 per cent around this time. Some early seeded crops have already emerged or are beginning to emerge. There are some reports of re-seeding in some fields. Still a concern is the delayed seeding in the Southern Region, which stands at 52 per cent complete, markedly below the 10-year average of 85 per cent. Table 1 below presents estimates of crop seeding progress in the province, by region.

During the last two weeks, most areas of the province have received some precipitation. Rain is still needed in many areas, as the lack of moisture reserves, particularly at the sub-surface level, is a concern. The exception is the Southern Region, where soil moisture conditions range from adequate to excessive. Provincially, surface moisture is rated as ten per cent poor, 29 per cent fair, 43 per cent good, 16 per cent excellent, and two per cent excessive. The rating of sub-surface moisture is 30 per cent poor, 30 per cent fair, 28 per cent good, 11 per cent excellent, and one per cent excessive. Just to note, following the completion of this crop reporting survey, there was some precipitation in the Peace and North West Regions, and western parts of the Central Region, on May 21-22.

Tame hay and pasture are showing good growth in the Southern Region and in most areas of the Central Region. Elsewhere in the province, growth has been slow. Provincially, pasture conditions are reported at 17 per cent poor, 33 per cent fair, 42 per cent good, and eight per cent excellent, while tame hay growth is rated as 13 per cent poor, 34 per cent fair, 44 per cent good, and nine per cent excellent. Some producers, primarily in the North East and North West Regions, are running short of feed supplies and are grazing cattle on pasture, despite its limited growth.

Spraying for post-emergence weed control has just begun, especially in the Peace and Central Regions. In general, winter kill in fall-seeded crops is minimal. Also reported is moderate soil erosion from spring run-off and winds in some areas of the province.

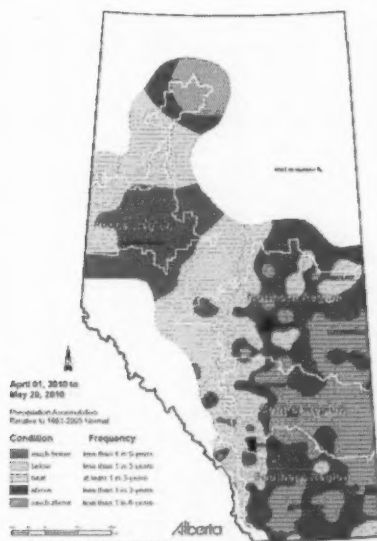


Table 1: Alberta Crop Seeding Progress, As of May 20, 2010

	South	Central	N. East	N. West	Peace	Alberta
Spring Wheat	49%	64%	74%	89%	96%	68%
Durum Wheat	58%	52%	60%	85%	90%	58%
Oats	48%	44%	39%	60%	90%	55%
Barley	52%	59%	56%	55%	92%	58%
Canola	56%	63%	73%	75%	89%	73%
Dry Peas	65%	80%	88%	99%	100%	80%
All Crops	52%	61%	67%	71%	92%	66%
May 6, 2010	8%	4%	3%	8%	8%	7%
May 21, 2009	76%	72%	65%	69%	46%	67%
10-year average	85%	80%	75%	75%	60%	75%

Source: Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development

Our thanks to Alberta Agricultural Fieldmen, staff of AFSC and the Alberta Ag-Info Centre for their partnership and contribution to the Alberta Crop Reporting Program.

REGIONAL ASSESSMENTS:

The 2010 Alberta Crop Report Series continues to provide summaries for the following five regions:

Region One: Southern (Strathmore, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Foremost)

- With the recent favorable weather conditions, seeding has progressed rapidly during the last 7-10 days, and stands at 52 per cent complete. This compares to eight per cent two weeks ago, and the 10-year average of 85 per cent around this time. The seeding delay this year is due to excessive moisture from rain and snow received in April and May, and to some extent, carryover of moisture reserves from last year. This is the case, particularly in the Cardston area, where seeding is less than ten per cent complete. Re-seeding in some fields, including winter wheat, has occurred. Soil moisture conditions are generally favorable, despite the excessive moisture reported in some areas.
- Seeding progress is estimated at seven per cent complete for dry beans, 50 per cent for mustard seed, 65 per cent for potatoes, and 75-80 per cent for chick peas, sugar beets and lentils.
- Pasture and tame hay are off to a good start this year, with conditions mostly rated as good to excellent.

Region Two: Central (Rimbey, Airdrie, Coronation, Oyen)

- Weather conditions during the last two weeks have been mainly warm and dry, allowing seeding to progress rapidly. Overall, seeding is estimated at 61 per cent complete, compared to the 10-year average of 80 per cent. However, this still represents good progress from four per cent two weeks ago. Winter kill in fall-seeded crops is reported in some areas.
- Due to the snow and rain received in April and May, moisture conditions in eastern parts of the region are mostly favorable. In western areas of the region, the lack of moisture reserves, particularly at the sub-surface level, is a concern. Just to note, following the completion of this crop reporting survey, there was some precipitation in the western parts of the region, on May 21-22.
- With the recent favorable weather conditions, pasture and tame hay are turning green, and are rated as four per cent poor, 20 per cent fair, 66 per cent good, and ten per cent excellent.

Region Three: North East (Smoky Lake, Vermilion, Camrose, Provost)

- With the warm, dry weather during the last two weeks, seeding in the region has progressed rapidly, and stands at 67 per cent complete. This compares to three per cent two weeks ago, and the 10-year average of 75 per cent around this time. Early-seeded crops are beginning to emerge.
- Soil moisture conditions vary across the region. Overall, surface moisture is rated as ten per cent poor, 42 per cent fair, 46 per cent good, and two per cent excellent, while the rating of sub-surface moisture is 33 per cent poor, 37 per cent fair, 27 per cent good, and three per cent excellent.
- Tame hay growth is reported as 20 per cent poor, 44 per cent fair, 33 per cent good, and three per cent excellent, while pasture conditions are rated as 34 per cent poor, 36 per cent fair, 28 per cent good, and two per cent excellent. There are some reports of the hay crop showing signs of slight frost damage.

Region Four: North West (Barrhead, Edmonton, Leduc, Drayton Valley, Athabasca)

- The mainly warm, dry weather conditions during the last two weeks have allowed seeding to progress rapidly. Overall, seeding is estimated at 69 per cent complete, compared to the 10-year average of 75 per cent. However, this still represents excellent progress from eight per cent two weeks ago.
- Although many areas of the region have received some precipitation during the last two weeks, the lack of moisture reserves, particularly at the sub-surface level, remains a concern.
- Tame hay and pasture conditions vary across the region, ranging from poor to good. Rain is needed, to improve pasture and tame hay growth. Just to note, following the completion of this crop reporting survey, there was some precipitation in most areas of the region, on May 21-22.

Region Five: Peace River (Fairview, Falher, Grande Prairie, Valleyview)

- Seeding is complete for dry peas, and is near completion for spring wheat. Overall, seeding is estimated at 92 per cent complete, compared to eight per cent two weeks ago, and the 10-year average of 60 per cent around this time. Crops left to be seeded are mainly oats, barley and canola. Early-seeded crops have emerged, or are emerging. In some areas, emerged crops have been damaged or killed by heavy frost.
- Dry conditions are a concern in most areas of the region, resulting mainly from a lack of precipitation this spring. The region needs rain, to allow seeds to germinate and pasture/tame hay to grow. Just to note, following the completion of this crop reporting survey, there was significant precipitation in the region, on May 21-22.
- Tame hay and pasture conditions vary across the region, ranging from poor to good.

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